MY DOG AND YOURS

JOE WALKER.

Grace Ashmore
November 1947.

MY DOG AND YOURS.

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BY

JOE WALKER.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY

G. L. STAMPA.

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DEDICATED
TO
MY WIFE'S LOVER,
WILLIE WINKIE
(Gentleman and Griffon)

Jock, A Glorious Time, Sad Dog, The Sowers, A Dull Afternoon, No !, Broken-Hearted, Friends of Yesterday, On the Landing, My Folk, To my (or any other) Cairn, and The Martinet are reprinted by kind permission of the proprietors of *Punch*. My thanks are also due to *The Windsor, The Sketch,* and other periodicals in which many of the verses have previously appeared.

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DOG TO MAN.

A Glorious Time.

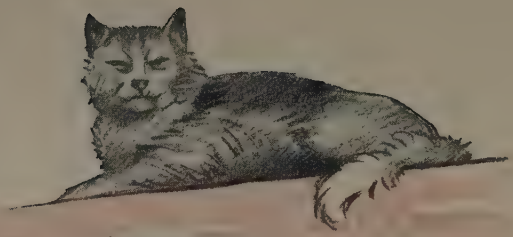
I *was* disgusted when I heard them say
They couldn't take me in the car to-day;
So, as they'd left me sitting all alone,
I just slipped out to ramble on my own.
There'll be a row, but I don't greatly mind;
It's all their fault for leaving me behind.
Well, I must say I've had some splendid fun
And done most things I oughtn't to have done.
You'd hardly know my coat is really white
(That means, I fear, another bath to-night);

And my left ear was chewed by next-door Jim—
There's always ructions when I chat with him;
While that revolting tabby down the street
Won't use bad language the next time we meet.
I can't remember how I hurt my jaw,
And something's happened to that off-side paw;
Still, it was worth it, and I don't complain;
I'd love to have it happen all again . . .
Here comes the car; I think I'd better creep
Into my basket and look fast asleep . . .
"Where have you been? and, goodness gracious,
how—
How did you get like this?" I'm for it, now!

Suspense.

There's lots of boxes on the floor,
John's brought the car round to the door
But Master hasn't gone to town,
He keeps on rushing up and down
Calling to Missis, "We'll be late!"
Cook's awful cross and so is Kate,
I don't seem loved by anyone,
I haven't had my early run,
I haven't had my breakfast toast,
But what is worrying me the most
Is—not a blessed soul will say
If they are taking me to-day.
I keep on asking; no one cares,
And all I get is "Off the stairs!"
I've kept *my* temper, but I'm blest
If I won't soon be like the rest.
Please, Master? . . . . . .
. . . . . Missis? . . . . . .
. . . . . Cookie? . . . Oh,
Won't somebody say Yes or No?

What's that? *My basket in the car!*
Ha! now we know just where we are!
Let's start at once, John!—we'll be late!
Wuff! Good-bye, Cookie! Good-bye, Kate!



On the Garden Wall.

How dare you sit up there and look so smug,
You smirking, mangy, lop-eared bit of rug?
Oh, how I'd love to shake you—and I'd try
If this disgusting wall was not so high.
I would, d'ye hear me? Don't be so absurd
And look as if you hadn't heard a word.
Who killed that sparrow? Yah, who pinched
the fish
Out of our larder and upset the dish?

(And Cook blamed *me!*) You green-eyed ball
of silk,
Don't purr at me—I'm not your blessed milk!
Come down, you coward, don't sneak off like
that!
(She's gone—the other side—just like a cat!)

Down by the River.

My word! That bird! Of course I'd never seen
So large a one before, but . . . well . . . I mean
A bird's a bird—and when you start to bark
It ought to scoot and let you have a lark.
But this one didn't; just turned round its head
And—I can't tell you half the things it said
(Worse than our cat!); then it stretched out its neck
And tried to give me such a vicious peck
Though I was just a leetle bit too quick.
Then Master came up with his walking-stick
And drove the beast away. When it had gone
He said, "Now, Jimmy, *never* tease a swan!"
If that's a "swan"—I won't. My! it's absurd,
But—I was *nearly* frightened of that bird.

Left Behind.

They've gone, but I can't go because it's wet.
(That was the gate.) It's all that horrid vet.—
The man in gaiters with the doggy smell,
That Missis sends for when I don't feel well.
Don't like him. Tells her that I'm "getting old,"
And "wouldn't do at all if he caught cold."
He shouldn't say such things. Poor Missis cried,
And hugged me very tightly. Wish I'd tried
To bite him! Ugh! And why should Peter go,
That silly puppy, I should like to know?
. . . All on my lonesome . . . It was most unkind
To take that Peter and leave me behind.

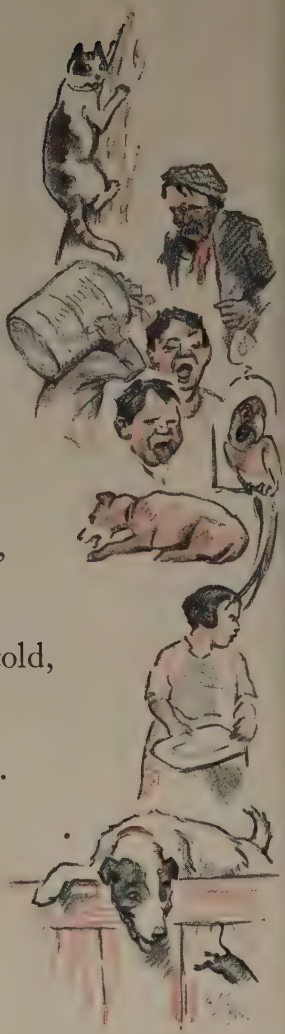
* * *

I think I must have dozed. What's that? Click-clack!
. . . Oh, Missis dear, at last, at last, you're back!

I'm not to touch that bed or you'll be vexed
And you'll tell Master? Well, whatever next!
Oh, yes, I heard exactly what you say,
But, Missis dear, 'twas only yesterday
I hid my special bone—I'll show you where.
What's that? I mustn't? Come, that's hardly fair,
For you've been hiding things as well as me;
I saw you scratching plain as plain could be
Quite near my bone. Do try another bed;
That's quite a nice one by the potting shed.
I'll help you make some proper holes, quite deep;
Then nobody will know. Come on (just keep
A sharp look-out for William). What d'you say?
You'll be so cross if I don't go away
Into the house and leave the beds alone?
All right; but don't forget, it's *mine,* that bone.

A Sad Dog.

Don't like postmen with their bags,
Don't like tramps in smelly rags,
Don't like cats who swarm up trees,
Don't like soap (but don't like fleas),
Don't like next-door Mrs. Jones,
Don't like pals who steal my bones,
Don't like draughts and don't like cold,
Don't like doing what I'm told,
Don't like dustmen's dirty faces,
Don't like boys who make grimaces.



Don't like walking with the pram,
Don't like doors that shut *kerblam!*
Don't like gas-fires when they plop,
Don't like Cook when "Where's that chop?"
Don't like Polly when she swears,
Don't like being turned off chairs,
Don't like wasps (their feet are hot),
Don't like—quite an awful lot
Of things that make a fellow sad:
Still, on the whole, life's not too bad.

What's in a Name?

If he says, "Now then, Sammy Boy, you must'nt
lag behind;
Come on, at once, you naughty dog!"—I know
I needn't mind
Or pay the least attention, for he's almost sure
to wait
Until I've finished chasing cats or dodging
through a gate.
Yes, Master's very patient, and I know just
where I am
If I hear cries of "Sammikins!" or "Samivell!"
or "Sam!"
But—no matter how attractive the cat or pal or
smell—
I make a quick bee-line to him when he calls
"SAM-U-EL!!"

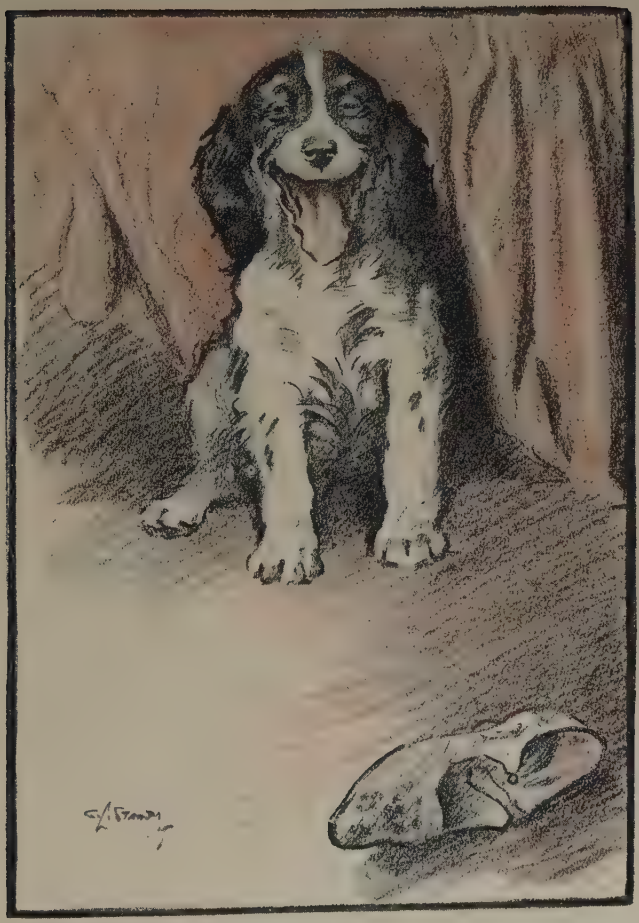
Bad Paw.

I'm really quite all right. Still, Missis thinks
She must have hurt me ("Dreffle sorry, Binks!")
And wants to kiss the place and make a fuss;
I'll let her, though it's so ridiculous.
Had it been Master—precious lot he'd say,
Unless "You nuisance—always in the way!"
I shan't forget the last time that he stepped
Right on my tail—I just laid down and wept.

But Missis, bless her—why I didn't know
She'd even touched me till she told me so.
Still, tea-time's coming, and I think I saw
Out in the kitchen scrumptious cakes! Oh lor!
If I limp round and try to look upset
Missis will—Bother! *Which* paw? . . . I forget.

Mischief.

I was tired of my ball, I'd just buried my bone,
I was feeling uncommonly blue,
When I suddenly found this nice shoe in the
hall, and I said, "Here's a good thing to
chew."
What a fuss there will be when they turn round
and look, then away to the garden I'll skip,
And Missis, half-laughing, will tell me I mustn't,
and Master will say, "Where's the whip?"
I shall race round the lawn and jump over the
beds, till they both of them give up the
chase,
Then I'll trot back to Master and lay down my
prize at his feet with a penitent face;
And I'll crouch and pretend that I'm dread-
fully grieved, while my sorrow I'll try to
explain;
But as soon as he smiles—I shall pick up my
treasure and race round the garden again.



Visitors.

I don't mind Mrs. Jenkins but I cannot stand
her pug—
The wheezy beast came waddling in and sat
upon *my* rug,
Then made an observation which he thought
I shouldn't hear,
But, come now, there are limits—and I told the
skunk to clear.
Then Mrs. J. got nervy, whilst my Missis kept
polite
And said I was "excited"! Me! And next
there was a fight
(Not really proper fighting, for he grovelled on
the floor);
Then someone came and stopped us . . . and
I'm here, outside the door.
Poor Fido's being coddled (*"Oh, I hope he's
not upset!"*
Now, Missis dear, how can you—why I scarcely
touched the pet!)

* * *

I can't stop here for ever; it's too draughty on
this mat.
Ha! the garden door is open . . . and, I'm
blessed . . . that next-door cat!

In Disgrace.

The garden gate was open (that was why)—
Just as the next-door cat looked in—My eye!
That wretch could move—the only thing to do
Was—follow her (I'd got no collar, too).
I thought she'd stop quite soon and have some fun;
Not she! She flew—my word, how I did run!
At last I missed her; how, I cannot say,
And when I stopped I found I'd lost my way.
Lost! Motor-cars that made a horrid noise;
Dogs that I didn't know, and teasing boys!
So when our housemaid's policeman picked me up
And said "No collar!—oh, it's *you,* my pup!"
I did feel glad, and barked and licked his face
All the way home—and now I'm in disgrace.
"*Go to your basket!*" No one looks at me;
Nobody says a word; no cake at tea;
I don't feel hungry, so I don't mind that,
But—Missis angry!—(dash that blessed cat!)
I wish she'd look this way, then I'd explain
The gate was . . . What, I can come out again?
Yes, Missis dear . . . yes, *very* sorry . . . but
You see . . . that cat . . . the front gate wasn't shut . . .

My First Kill.

'Twas Burton showed me where it was and told
me not to wait,
Whilst Walter moved the dust-bin out and shut
the garden gate;
Then Master said, "Now, here's your chance;
come on, my flop-eared son"
(I must admit, until he spoke, I felt inclined to
run);
Maria whacked it with her broom, and then sat
down and cried,
And Cookie screamed and frightened it before
she ran inside;
The cat said, "After you, old chap; he's rather
big for me,
So I shan't interfere at all," and scrambled up a
tree;
Next someone threw a lump of coal and made
the beast turn round;

Then—I went in and finished it and flung it on
the ground.
So that is how I caught the rat entirely on my
own,
And Master's pleased as pleased can be; he's
gone to fetch a bone.

Master? He *talks* a lot about the whip, but there! Dear Missis?
"Now, Mac, the next time, mind, you'll get . . ." It always ends in kisses.
Cook? Often says if I were *her* dog . . . But, when we're alone
And I look sad and mournful-like, out comes a spiffin' bone.
Mary? *"My word! Your muddy paws—just as I've washed the hall!*
If they keep you, then I shall go!" (Yes, Mary bought that ball.)
William? *"My* garden!" bless him! Just as fussy as can be. —
"Look 'ere! That hole—my daffys—spoilt!" (Bill shares his lunch with me.)
Oh, I get on all right. They *talk;* I never answer back;
I just look up—like this. And then they smile, because—I'm Mac.

No!

In lots of ways the chap next door's the luckiest
of tykes,
He seems to be quite on his own and does just
what he likes;
If he comes in with muddy paws he tells me no
one cares;
And if he wants to fight—he scraps with every
dog he dares;
He eats whatever tasty bits he happens to select
From gutter, dustbin, anywhere, without a bad
effect;
He hardly ever has a bath, his folks don't keep
a comb,
Sometimes he stops out all the day and sleeps
away from home;
He's never whipped, he jumps on chairs, he
scratches all the paint;
He buries bones just where he likes and no one
says "You mayn't!"
He often asks me—"Don't I wish that I was
free like him?"
"H'm! . . . P'raps . . . in some ways . . .
No, I don't, *'cos no one loves you, Jim.*"

Something Wrong.

I know there's something wrong. Why won't
they say
What is the matter? Only yesterday
I crept upstairs to see. She lay in bed;
She didn't speak to me, just stroked my head.
They wouldn't let me stop; I had to go
Out of the room at once. I want to know.
. . . Yes, everyone is very kind to me . . .
Why do they say "Poor chap"? To-day at tea
I couldn't touch my sugar. What's the good
Of sugar, when . . . I wish they understood.
There's something wrong. The house seems
very dark . . .
Old David wants to take me in the park,
But I don't want to go. I'll wait until
I hear her saying, "Ready now, dear Bill."
. . . Supposing . . . something . . . Why don't
they explain?
. . . I'll wait a bit, then steal upstairs again.

On the Window-Sill.

Nothing doing. Jolly slow!
Postman passed some time ago,
Made a face at me—went by;
Very disappointing, I
Thought I'd catch him at the gate,
But I missed him—just too late.
(Wonder why I hate him so;
Well, I do, that's all I know.)

. . . Hullo, Sam, do stop and talk!
What? You're going for a walk? . . .
No, I can't—you silly mutt,
Don't you see the gate is shut?
I say, Sam, will you . . . he's gone.
Hasn't got his collar on;
Won't there be a jolly row
If he meets his master now!

* * *

What a road! you never see
Anything, it seems to me.

* * *

Ha! what's that? . . . It sounds as if
Sam's indulging in a tiff
With the tyke at Number One;
Bother! I can't see the fun.
Sam had better mind . . . that whelp . . .
Listen! there's his call for help!
. . . Good! here's Cook! . . . Yes, I won't
shout
If you'll . . . yes, please . . . let me out.
Yes, *at once,* please, Cook—I am
In a hurry! . . . . . Coming, Sam!!!

Next Collection—6.45 p.m.

Master, aren't we ever, ever going out to catch
the post?
Seems to me like half a lifetime since I finished
up your toast.
I've been sitting at the window till it's very
nearly dark,
Never once I've interrupted, never once you've
heard me bark
Though that cat came through our garden right
across the beds and grass,
I just shut my eyes pretending that I hadn't seen
her pass.
Do stop scratching on that paper—don't forget
me, Master, quite,
You half-promised that you'd take me out across
the fields to-night.

What—you've finished? Get your boots on,
push away that silly stuff;
I'll slip off and fetch my collar. Come along,
now—Wuff! Wuff! WUFF!

To Missis—URGENT.

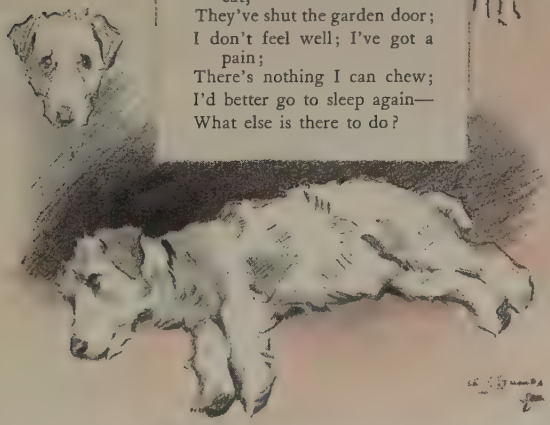
Please come back soon. I've been as good as
gold;
I've done exactly everything I'm told;
And she's quite pleased with me, she told me so.
She's very kind, but oh, she doesn't know
The things a fellow likes. She never talks
To me, and though we never miss my walks,
I'm always on the lead; and if I meet
Some chap I know, it's "Come along, my sweet;
He's quite a common dog." To-day she stopped
And stroked a cat! I thought I should have
dropped.
When you come back I wonder if you'll know
Your darling Jack; I feel I've altered so.
I'm off my feed, it doesn't taste the same
(My biscuit's cracked too small). Oh, for a
game—
A proper one—you know—when you go
"Wuff!"
Whilst I rush round until I've had enough

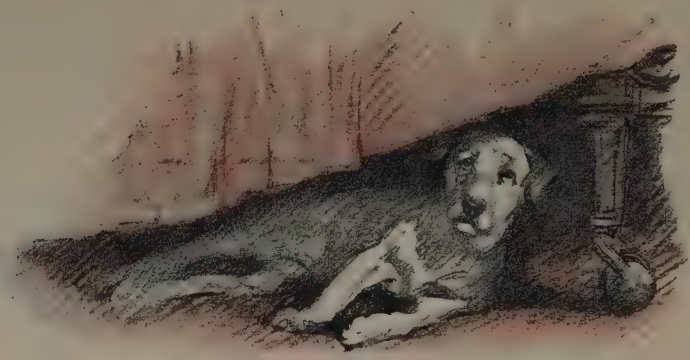
And say "Let's stop," and then you let me creep
On to your lap, and I fall fast asleep.
You might let Master know how good I've been;
Give him my love. (I know she doesn't mean
To be unkind. She doesn't understand;
That's all.) I want—I want—to feel your hand
Just scrub-a-dubbing me behind my ear,
And Master calling out, "You wretch, come here!"
I want you both, such lots. Please, please, come back.
Your very, very mournful bow-wow,

JACK.

A Dull Afternoon.

I don't know where I put my
ball
And someone's pinched my
bone;
My basket's in the draughty
hall;
They've left me quite alone;
I can't play with the kitchen
mat
'Cos Cook's just washed the
floor;
I can't run out and chase that
cat,
They've shut the garden door;
I don't feel well; I've got a
pain;
There's nothing I can chew;
I'd better go to sleep again—
What else is there to do?





Broken-Hearted.

. . . No, thank you, Cook; I think I'd sooner
stay
Under the sofa. No, don't want to play.
I couldn't, really. Never mind my ball.
A run? No, thank you. Drefful sad—that's all.
They've both gone off and didn't say good-bye!
I *won't* be comforted, so please don't try.
Rotten, I call it . . . simply . . . rotten.
. . . . . Oo!

I must have been asleep; I'm hungry too.
Why, hullo, Cook! All right, I'll come and see.
Wait till I've stretched. You've something nice
for me
Out in the kitchen? Yes, I'll run and look
Under the table. . . . *What* a bone! Oh, Cook!

Collaboration.

It's rather dull up here—you cannot see
Over the wall—but when he says to me
"Come on, old chap, we've got to do some work,"
I run upstairs at once—not me to shirk
When he wants help. He puts me on the sill
And I curl round and never move until
He lights his pipe again, and says, "Not bad!"
And then I growl to let him know I'm glad
We're getting on. (Sometimes I cannot keep
Awake—he's hours and hours—and then I sleep.
I don't like doing so—he thinks I'm bored;
And once there *was* a row—he said I snored!)
But when I hear, "Good! Got it!"—I turn round
And wait for him to put me on the ground
And pat my head and say to me, "We've done!
Now for your biscuit and a game, old son!"

* * *

He says he works much better when I'm there
Tucked in the window just behind his chair,
So though it's dull at times, I wouldn't be—
Anywhere else for worlds. I help, you see.

A Reasonable Excuse.

They're calling us.
Don't be absurd.
We must pretend we haven't heard,
And not turn round. They're sure to wait
If we don't catch them by the gate;
They always do.
Last time we stayed
Looking for—*Sandy, you're afraid!*
Run if you like, but I shan't go
Until I—Leave you, Peter? No!
I only wanted to explain
That—*Ooh! it's moving off again.*
Where, Peter, where? *Look! can't you see—*
Right over there beyond that tree?
Not THERE, *old stupid—farther on*
Below the rushes—Oh, it's gone!
I THINK I saw it. Anyhow,
Hadn't we better join them now?
Perhaps we had. Mind, when we do,
Leave it to me to pull us through.
But—if they're cross—*You mustn't mind.*
Suppose you wait a bit behind
Whilst I run on to Master dear,
And say, "We saw a rat QUITE *near,*
But it swam off and didn't land."
Then—*Then he'll smile and understand.*

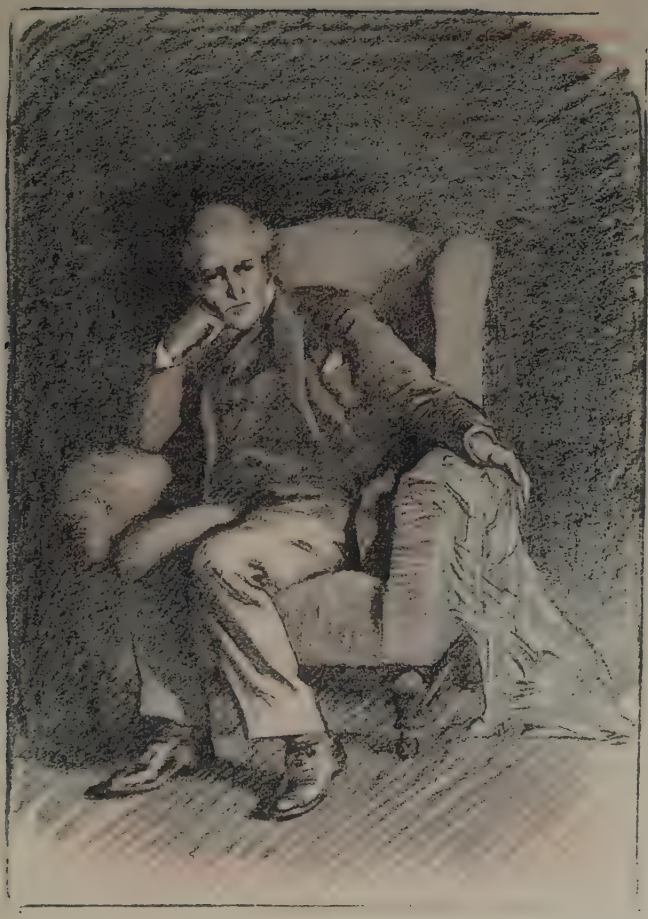
Jock.

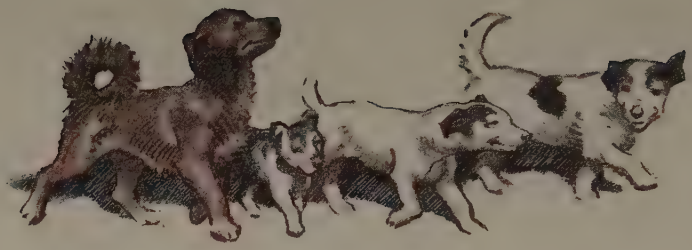
Master, I'm getting very old. Somehow I know
That soon I'll have to leave you. When I go,
Will you feel sad to find that Jock's not there
Waiting, till you come down, beside your chair?
Our walks, and those long evenings by the fire,
Just you and me—what more could I desire?
But soon I'll have to leave you. Don't forget . . .
After a while . . . another dog . . . and yet . . .
(I wonder if you understand just what I mean)
Some other dog . . . but . . . *not* an Aberdeen.

MAN TO DOG.

The Blank.

Somebody's left the garden gate ajar;
He won't run out. No need to back the car
So carefully because . . . And in the hall
You will not trip against that much-chewed ball
(I bought a new one, just a week ago,
For his next birthday. He will never know).
We've cleared up everything; there's not a
trace—
Lead, collar, basket—yet his wistful face
Peers round each corner; halfway down the stair
One turns expectant . . . surely he is there?
Then we remember, and the silence drear
Answers our question. *"No, he is not here."*



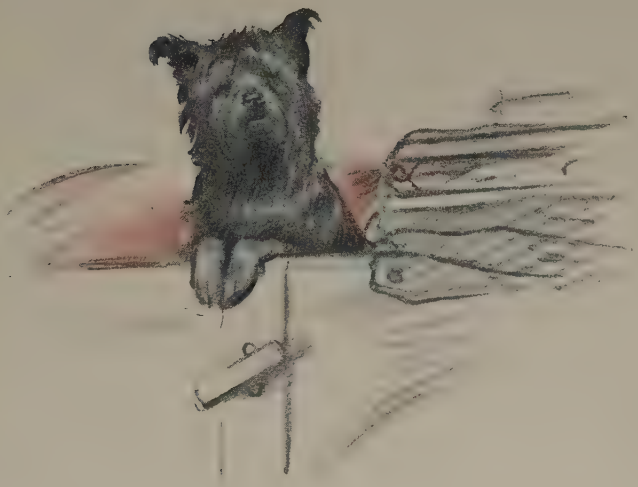


The Friends of Yesterday.

There was a time—and not so long ago—
When you, my Robert, were quite pleased to know
Your doggy neighbours up and down the road,
And would invite them in to my abode.

In fact I often wished, when I espied
Some unwashed mongrel trotting by your side,
That you would be a leetle more inclined
To pick and choose among your fellow-kind.

But since our car arrived I grieve to say
You quite ignore those friends of yesterday;
Perched on the seat, you cut them dead, you
snob!
Don't be so human—be a dog, my Bob.



Dumb or Deaf?

They cannot speak? Surely you understand
A cold nose nuzzling gently 'gainst your hand;
"Just a reminder, lest you might forget
I haven't had my lump of sugar yet."
A touch of velvet paw, which says: "Oh, please,
I'm feeling lonely—take me on your knees."
Or, best of all—the eager soul-lit glow
In faithful eyes: "Master, I love you so."
Dumb? Not a whit! If you can't comprehend,
You're deaf—heart-deaf, my most unhappy friend.

Taffy.

Our dustbin's full, nay more, it's overflowing;
The dustman will not call; he says he's going
To—something dreadful. Shortly after eight,
The postman whistles at the garden gate;
He won't come down the drive. In thin-soled slippers
I sally forth, leaving my toast and kippers,
And gather up the letters. (No denying
That when it rains I find it rather trying.)
The lawn is mostly holes; the paintwork's scratched
On every door; the hen that should have hatched
A brood last week has vanished from our ken;
A neighbour's maid to-night at half-past ten
Called for their cat. Still, why complain and grouse?
It cheers one up—a dog about the house.

Willie Winkie.

Two brown eyes and one black nose;
Stumpy tail and muddy toes;
Hates the dustman (also cats);
Worries slippers, gloves and mats;
Knows when Sunday comes (the day
When "he" doesn't go away);
Hates to see you read a book;
Sneaking liking for the cook;
Coat when brushed as soft as silk;
Ten years old, still dotes on milk;
Fond of "him"—a decent chap—
But *"don't touch me on 'her' lap!"*
By the fireside snugly curled,
"She and He and me—my world!
Other people bore me stiff."
Willie Winkie—gallant griff!

On the Landing.

First a yawn and then a sigh,
Watches Mary passing by,
Cook soon follows (*"Now then, Pup,*
'Tisn't time—you can't get up")
Interval for forty winks,
Wakes and shakes himself and blinks,
Manicures a paw with care,
One eye watchful on the stair,
Views his basket with disdain,
Chews it, falls asleep again,
Fleeting dream of next-door cat
In *our* garden—What was that?
Starts up suddenly—Hooray!
Mary coming with the tray
And hot water! Joyous sight!
Little growls of wild delight,

Scurryings across the floor,
Frenzied scratchings at their door
(*"Who on earth now can that be?"*)
"Please don't tease—of course it's me!"

My Oriental Neighbour.

Your master says you're handsome. I agree,
But, all the same, you don't appeal to me.
Something too much of cynical surmise
Lurks in the glitter of those Eastern eyes.
Aloof and calm, you pierce me through and through;
"I'm not acquainted, stranger man, with you,"
(Your look implies) "and—to be frank and plain—
I've no desire to see your face again."
And this although, as you must sure recall,
Just now we met outside the garden wall; —
Then, as I stooped to pat you on the head,
Remember what you did—and what I said.
Handsome, oh yes! But even you'll allow
It's not surprising I don't like you, Chow.

The Others.

Do they—the other dogs, whom he would greet
With friendly tail as we passed down the street,
Stopping to pass the time of day, then tear
To catch me up—I wonder, do they care?
I think they must, for all were pals with him
(Except, perhaps, old surly next-door Tim—
And that was not Jack's fault). I seem to spy
The wistful question in each limpid eye,
"Where's Jack? Why isn't he with you to-day?"
Then they turn back and recommence their play,
Though one, a mongrel, Jack's especial chum,
Follows a little—"If you like, I'll come,
As he's not with you," but I hasten on;
"Thanks, but . . . it's Jack I want . . . and Jack has gone."

Yours.

He may be smooth, he may be rough—he may
be big or wee,
A mongrel from his tail to tip—a hound of
pedigree,
He may love postmen (he may not)—he may
be scared of cats,
He may object to moonlit nights—he may be
rough on rats,
You whistle and he comes—or else you call
until you're tired,
The laughing stock of all your friends—by
everyone admired,
He may have grasped the mystic truth that
paths are where one treads,
He may rout up your new-sown seeds and bury
bones in beds—
You do not really care a bit—enough that he's
your own,
Yes, just *your* dog—the only dog—just yours
and yours alone.

High Street.

Yes, it was no one's fault; let's be quite fair.
He missed me, somehow, and stood waiting there,
Then thought he saw me (sight was none too good),
Started to cross . . . The man did all he could—
A careful driver. (. . . *"got one of my own . . . Not for a thousand pounds . . ."*) I stand—alone.

* * *

The traffic melts once more, the newsboys cry,
And pigeons circle in a smiling sky.
. . . "Yes, he was mine. . . . Look here, if you don't go
Away at once . . ." Why did I scold him so,
Only this morning? . . . Now I must get back
And tell her, somehow—when she asks
"Where's Jack?"

To His Dog.

Sadly you seek him through the house—in vain;
He's gone, dear dog—he won't come back again.
We know he won't, but you still hope and grieve;
"*A little longer—then . . .*" You can't believe
That nevermore you'll run to lick his hand
Or hear his voice. How could you understand?

* * *

The weeks will pass—but you'll still pine and fret;
You will grow old—but you will not forget,
Nor will you ever harbour in your mind
The thought that he was wilfully unkind,
But—"*something's happened . . .*" Still you doze and wait . . .
"*Was that his whistle at the garden gate?*"
At last, you'll . . . fall asleep. A little sigh . . .
"*To-morrow . . . we . . . may meet . . .*"

* * *

Hope on! Good-bye!

Waiting up for Master.

Asleep? Not they—for, as you close the door,
Hark to a patter on the parquet floor,
And little squeals of unalloyed delight;
"At last you're back; you're very late to-night.
We thought you'd never come." The greetings cease,
Whilst eager glances scan the mantelpiece.
Ecstatic silence! as you turn to take
Down from its resting-place, then slowly break
The ritual biscuit into equal shares—
Jock's on the mat, and Peter's by the stairs.
The last crumb finished, with reluctant tread
Each seeks the comfort of his cosy bed
(Viewing the other with suspicious frown,
To make quite certain that he's settling down).

"Now, not a sound! Good-night!" Four amber eyes
Strive to convey their sad—nay, pained surprise.
Out goes the light; upstairs you softly creep.
. . . Two little sighs . . . Two happy dogs asleep.

Pete.

I couldn't sell you, nohow, if I tried,
I couldn't lose you,
And, to be frank, it cannot be denied
I didn't choose you
For breed or looks; you're just plain "dog"—
that's all,
Your colour yellow,
In shape betwixt a barrel and a ball,
A worthless fellow
Consorting with the lowest of the low,
The well-breds flout you,
Nevertheless, I somehow love you so,
Can't do without you.
And if . . . some day . . . well, if that other Pete
Says, "Can't receive him!"
(Pointing at you)—we'll beat a quick retreat,
My Pete, and leave him,
And find elsewhere, above some friendlier portals—
"Elysian Fields (for *dogs* as well as mortals)."

Feeling Lonely.

A little whimper, next a patient sigh,
And then a sniff—(*Oh dear, there's no reply!*)
A little patter on the landing floor,
A gentle scratching at my study door,
Another pause, and then—"Well, who is that?"
The door swings open, there upon the mat
He stands expectant—"Please it's only me.
There's nobody downstairs; I thought I'd see
If you were lonely too. Please, may I stay?
I promise you I won't be in the way."
Then at your feet contentedly he lies,
A world's devotion in two doggy eyes.

The Decision.

'Tis not your going that has bruised my heart;
I knew the time was near when we must part.
Nearly twelve years! and life was scarce worth
while
For you, too old. I trusted I might smile
If some day I should wake to find that Fate
Had said "Sleep on," and I, though desolate,
Might comfort take in thought of you at rest
And strive to murmur "All is for the best."
Yes, then I *might* have smiled—but that to me
Was left the verdict, that 'twas my decree
Which sent you forth, you whom I treasured
so . . .
This is my torment, this the crushing blow.

Buried Treasure.

I turn the earth, and there—disclosed to view—
The buried treasure, still of ivory hue;
It must have been the last bone that he had.
I see him trotting business-like and glad
To find a hiding-place for this great prize
Safe from the glance of prying human eyes,
Then hastening houseward with suspicious mien;
"Now don't pretend you know where I have been!"
Had he forgotten where his treasure lay?
Would he have come—perhaps the very day . . ?
I cover it again. A tiny bit
Of something else is buried, too, with it.

The Choice.

". . . Hard, very hard, to decide. But, come,
dear, now which shall it be?"
I looked in Barbara's face, and Barbara glanced
back at me.
"Still, we must make up our mind—make it at
once; yes, to-night;
Shall it be Bryn (on the left), or Sailor (the one
to the right)?"
Silence. A sad little sigh rose from each sorrow-
ful heart;
Limpid brown eyes seemed to say: "But surely
we haven't to part!"
Came at long last the reply: "If I really must
make up my mind . . .
I think . . . on the whole . . . No, I won't!
Oh, I cannot leave *either* behind."

Six Little Aberdeens.

Six little Aberdeens strolling down the drive—
Alec stopped to chase a cat, and then there were
five;
Five little Aberdeens reached the garden door,
Donald slipped into the road, and then there
were four;

Four little Aberdeens—a fussy bumble-bee
Buzzed round wee McPherson's nose, and then
there were three;
Three little Aberdeens—the grumpy postman
threw
His bag at nervous Master Jock, and then there
were two;
Two little Aberdeens cried, "Which of us can
run
The fastest?"—Bingo tripped and fell, and then
there was one;
One lonely Aberdeen said, "I feel rather ill,
And so I'll trot straight back to Ma," which
leaves exactly—*nil*.

Our Road.

A poodle lives at Number One, a peke at Number Two,
At Number Three a wire-haired dwells who howls the whole night through.

An Aberdeen next door to him keeps all of us alive,
It seems he doesn't quite approve the pom at Number Five.

Round Number Six a moody Dane stalks with a jaundiced air,
And chaperones a schipperke alert and debonair.

At Number Seven's to be found a four-legged matted rug
Contemned by lordly Number Eight—a supercilious pug.

At Nine and Ten respectively no hawker cares to call
For chow and collie lie in wait beside the garden wall.

In short, our road's the cynosure of all the
neighbouring flats;
"No dogs allowed"—their mournful cry, and
we retort—"No cats!"

To My (or any other) Cairn.

I do not want to stress the point, my lad,
But—could you manage not to look so sad
When you and I proceed to take the air
Adown the High Street or across the Square?
Dear kind old ladies pat you on the head
And hint unkindly that you're underfed,
Then mutter vaguely . . . if they had their
way . . .
They'd . . . yes . . . inspector . . . R.S.P.C.A.;
And you, instead of championing my cause,
Droop ears and tail and contemplate your paws.
They little know your life's a strenuous lark;
From early morning until long past dark
You please yourself in every blessed way
With scant attention to what I may say,
Yet to the world you show a mournful face
That hints of hardship and unearned disgrace.
So, come now, Jerry (Jerry is your name—
Not Jeremiah), come now, play the game;
Smile when in public, or, if you won't smile,
Give an impression that life seems worth while.
It is, you know; you're not misfortune's bairn
But a most lucky and contented Cairn.

Next Door.

Feeble, so old, he lies outside his gate
Sunning himself. Why should unkindly Fate
Have passed him by, for life to him must seem
But the chill shadow of a long-past dream?
I hasten on, nor stoop to pat his head.
It isn't fair . . . my six-month puppy . . . dead.

The Martinet.

If you were mine you wouldn't dare to loll in
easy chairs,
Or ask for cake at tea or leave your bone upon
the stairs.
(Most dangerous!) If you were mine, my lad,
you wouldn't bark
At visitors, or go for strolls alone when it was
dark.
You'd sleep beside the kitchen fire, and if you
liked to yell
At 3 a.m. or so because you didn't feel quite well
You wouldn't find *me* coming down in dis-
habille, my pet,
To hold your paw or take your temp. or tele-
phone the vet.
If you were mine (don't lick my face!) you'd
jolly well behave;
I should be very, very strict and not your willing
slave.
If you were mine—well, what d'you want?
Oh, I'm to bounce your ball!
All right, how's that? Look, over there—it's
rolled into the hall.

Do it again? No, that's enough. Now I'm to
lift you up
To see who's coming down the drive? . . .
Up with you—there, my pup!

* * *

This beggar's rather quaint, old man. What
do you call him? "Jim?"
"A nuisance?" Nonsense! *Let me know if you
get tired of him.*

The Quest.

Across the golden floor he strayed,
Unkempt and tired, but undismayed,
And in and out and up and down
He searched, and sniffed each saintly gown
Whilst scandalised arch-angels shooed,
And seraphs ceased their song and booed.
"I want my friend—my master dear!"
"Hence, mangy cur—he is not here;
He was a sinner . . ."
"That may be,
But he was always good to me.
You need not fear I'd wish to stay
In Heaven without my Man. Good day."
He left in haste the Blest Abode,
And, joyous, took the Lower Road.

Going to the Dogs.

"When people come to stay with me they are much more interested in my dogs than in me."
—LORD KNUTSFORD.

Much as I dislike Aunt Pollie,
She's the owner of a collie;
I'd not visit Uncle Daniel
If it were not for his spaniel;
Old Grandpapa is fat and smug,
We hate each other, but—his pug!
While Cousin Stephen bores me stiff
Yet I endure him—for his griff;
My sister Prue I cannot please
Though I adore her Pekingese;
And her fiancé I abhor
But he's just bought a Labrador;

My mother's brother Uncle Tom
Snaps in my face—not so his pom;
Godpa Smith's a gay deceiver,
Still he owns a prize retriever;
She's the limit, Great-aunt Sukie,
But I worship her saluki.
So all my relatives, you see,
Are most obnoxious unto me,
And I should never on them call
But for their dogs—I love them all.

To an Alsatian Wolf-Dog.

An ancestor of yours, long years ago,
Scared poor Red Riding Hood? It can't be so:
I'll not believe it. Had *you* chanced to meet
Within the wood that damsel shy and sweet,
You would have greeted her with joyous air
And shielded her with loving, jealous care
From all those ills that chaperonless maids
Haply encounter in dim forest glades.
The cottage reached, outside you would have stood
(Handing the basket first to Riding Hood)
And waited there until at close of day
You led the child upon her homeward way.
(And howsoever hungry you might feel
You'd not have asked of Grandmamma a meal.)

I'm sure of this, for I have watched you pace
Beside Clorinda, gazing in her face
With looks that said, "Beloved mistress mine,
My life itself I gladly would resign
To keep you safe. What greater joy have I
Than at your feet to live—if need be, die."
Who dare cry *Wolf*? Sure no one who shall see
Those faithful eyes, dear hound of high degree.

January 1st.

(*Dog Licenses renewable.*)

Five years. Each year it was the same; I'd stop
To pick him up inside the village shop
And put him on the counter, then he'd bark;
He didn't understand, but *"here's a lark!"*
The postmistress would pat his head and say,
"Well, Mr. Bow-wow, what d'you want to-day?
Your license? Well, let's see your money,
please!"
He'd glance at me—"Come, hurry up, don't
tease,
We can't stop here too long; I want my run."
I'd lift him down, and then, the business done,
Off we would go. Five years. To-day . . . no
need . . .
I've put away his collar and his lead.

The Successor.

I shall get fond of you, but—not just yet.
After a little while I shall forget—
At least I hope I shall . . . until it feels
Less strange to know you're trotting at my heels.
Don't look at me like that . . . I can't explain . . .
Extremely fond of you . . . but, oh, the pain
And longing for him—for that other one!
. . . Yes, quite good dog! there's nothing you have done . . .
It's not your fault—it's I that am to blame—
"Nearly a year," said I, and so—you came.
A little year! Fool! for I might have known . . .

* * *

Come along, Puppy! Let's play with your bone.

Something More.

"A well-trained dog"—you say with pride,
But—is he nothing else beside?
Just that alone? Nay, mark what lies
Within the depth of soulful eyes:
A look which says, "You are to me
The god of my idolatry.
It matters not what you may do;
'Twill sure be right since you are—you.
My only joy to see you glad;
When you are grieved I, too, am sad.
To be where you are and to bend
My will to yours—that is the end
And be-all of my life. What more
Can I desire or hunger for?"
"A well-trained dog"—yes, that is clear,
But more—a faithful friend stands here.

An Unnecessary Question.

If I were Dog and Dog were Me,
I wonder if we should agree
As well as we do now. Can't say.
Dog, what d'you think about it, pray?
He turns on me a serious eye
As one who ponders his reply,
Then shakes his head. "It wouldn't do
If You were Me and I were You.
So do not talk about it, please,
But let me jump up on your knees
And go to sleep." He lifts his head
And looks at me as if he said,
"Your foolish question merely shows
You're not so wise as you suppose;
What problem is there to discuss?
There is no You and Me—just Us."

Alec of Aberdeen.

Two thoughtful eyes; a visage sweetly quaint;
A spice of devil with a touch of saint;
Strange, happy mixture of the gay and grave;
A son of freedom, yet a willing slave
To "My dear Master." (Let him praise or blame,
Grant or deny—"dear Master" all the same.)
Shrewd and demure, he patters at your side,
Humble yet haughty, meek but dignified;
In fact, a sort of halo round him clings
Slightly suggestive of a pair of wings.
But, Alexander, sometimes I espy
A reminiscent glitter in your eye
Which puzzles me—as if your thoughts were cast
Back in the shadows of a lurid past.
Do you recall some pre-existent state
When you, alas, were unregenerate
And in a fury set your world agog,
Smashing to bits the canine decalogue?
"Gone are those days" (that twinkle might suggest);
"This life well-ordered is by far the best.
Those hectic days when I was bad and mad . . .
But—all the same—what glorious fun I had!"

The Friend of God.

Evening in Heaven. On his star-lit throne
God sat in silence, sorrowful, alone.
Up from the earth, stabbing the peaceful air,
Arose harsh cries of strife and wild despair.
The angels had withdrawn; what could they
say
Or do to drive their Master's grief away?
Then to the seat crept one and licked his hand;
"Your dog can't help—but, oh, I understand
And am so sorry." On that shaggy head
God dropped a tear, and God was comforted.

Au Revoir.

"O, urna, nunquam sis tuo eruta hortulo,
Cor intus est fidele, nam cor est canis.
Vale, hortule, aeternumque Pomero vale.
Sed, si datur, nostri memor."

—W. S. Landor.

Good-bye. May he who next shall own
My garden spare this tiny stone
That marks the spot where, trouble-free,
You sleep (and dream, perchance, of me).
I hope he will; yet, wherefore fret?
We could not, if we would, forget
Each other. When, in turn, the dark
Shall glaze my eyes, your joyous bark
Will greet me, echoing to the sky.
Till then, dear loving heart, good-bye.